

This is an official

# DHEC Health Update

Distributed via the South Carolina Health Alert Network  
18 Aug 06, 10:30am

## **Increase in Reports of Cryptosporidiosis In Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester Counties**

### **Update Summary**

- Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester counties have documented an increase in reports of Cryptosporidia positive stool specimens.
- Health Care Providers are reminded to report all cases of Cryptosporidiosis to Local Public Health.
- Health Care providers should request appropriate laboratory tests for Cryptosporidiosis in persons that have clinically compatible symptoms, especially those persons that report recreational water exposure.

### **Background Information**

Since June 1<sup>st</sup> DHEC has received reports of 23 cases of laboratory-confirmed Cryptosporidiosis among children and adults in Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester counties. Many of these cases appear to be related to **recreational water exposure**, which is the primary method of spread of this illness in South Carolina, especially during the summer months. The epidemiological investigation of reported cases has not identified a single common source exposure; however this investigation is ongoing.

Cryptosporidiosis is a diarrheal disease caused by microscopic parasites of the genus *Cryptosporidium*. Both the disease and the parasite are commonly known as "crypto." Once an animal or person is infected, the parasite lives in the intestine and passes in the stool. The spore phase of the parasite's life cycle, or "oocyst", allows it to survive outside the body for long periods of time and makes it **very resistant to chlorine- based disinfectants**. Crypto may survive up to a week in swimming pools under standard chlorination procedures.

### **Clinical Information**

The median incubation time for cryptosporidiosis is 7 days. The most common symptom of Cryptosporidiosis is watery diarrhea. Other symptoms may include dehydration, weight loss, stomach cramps or pain, fever, nausea, and vomiting. Some people with crypto will have no symptoms at all. In immunocompetent people, the diarrheal disease is self-limited, usually lasting 1-20 days. While the small intestine is the site most commonly affected, *Cryptosporidium* infections could possibly affect other areas of the digestive or the respiratory tract. Shedding of oocysts in stool may continue for up to two weeks after symptom resolution.

### **Risk Factors for Cryptosporidium**

People who are most likely to become infected with *Cryptosporidium* include:

- Swimmers who swallow water while swimming in recreational swimming waters, lakes, rivers, ponds, and streams
- Children who attend day care centers, including diapered children
- Child care workers
- Parents of infected children
- Persons in contact with infected farm livestock, petting zoo animals, or pets.
- International travelers
- Backpackers, hikers, and campers who drink unfiltered, untreated water
- Persons who drink from shallow, unprotected wells
- Persons who swallow water from contaminated sources

## Diagnostic Tests and Laboratory Confirmation

- The detection of oocysts on microscopic examination of stool specimens is diagnostic. Unfortunately, routine laboratory examination of stool for ova and parasites will not detect *Cryptosporidium* species.
- The sucrose flotation method or formalin ethyl acetate method is used to concentrate oocysts in stool before staining with a modified Kinyoun acid-fast stain.
- Monoclonal antibody-based fluorescein-conjugated stain for oocysts in stool and an enzyme immunoassay (EIA) for detecting antigen in stool are available commercially.
- Because shedding can be intermittent, at least 3 stool specimens collected on separate days should be examined before considering test results negative. Oocysts are small (4-6 UM in diameter) and can be missed in a rapid scan of a slide.

## Sources for Additional Information

Additional information regarding Cryptosporidiosis and disease transmission in recreational water can be found at:

- <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/index.htm>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dpd/parasites/cryptosporidiosis>
- American Academy of Pediatrics. *Red Book: 2006 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*. 27<sup>th</sup> ed.

## DHEC Contact Information for Reportable Diseases and Reporting Requirements

Reporting of cases or possible cases of Cryptosporidiosis is consistent with South Carolina Law requiring the reporting of diseases and conditions to your state or local public health department (State Law # 44-29-10 and Regulation # 61-20) as per the DHEC 2006 List of Reportable Conditions available at: [http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/docs/reportable\\_conditions.pdf](http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/docs/reportable_conditions.pdf).

Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities to collect and receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512).

## Regional Public Health Offices

*Mail or call reports to the Epidemiology Office in each Public Health Region.*

### **Region 1**

#### **(Anderson, Oconee)**

220 McGee Road  
Anderson, SC 29625  
Phone: (864) 231-1966  
Fax: (864) 260-5623  
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-298-4442

#### **(Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Saluda)**

1736 S. Main Street  
Greenwood, SC 29646  
Phone: 1-888-218-5475  
Fax: (864) 942-3690  
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-420-1915

### **Region 2**

#### **(Greenville, Pickens)**

PO Box 2507  
200 University Ridge  
Greenville, SC 29602-2507  
Phone: (864) 282-4139  
Fax: (864) 282-4373  
Nights / Weekends: (864) 460-5355 or  
1-800-993-1186

#### **(Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union)**

PO Box 4217  
151 E. Wood Street  
Spartanburg, SC 29305-4217  
Phone: (864) 596-2227 ext. 210  
Fax: (864) 596-3443  
Nights / Weekends: (864) 809-3825 or  
1-800-993-1186

### **Region 3**

#### **(Chester, Lancaster, York)**

PO Box 817  
1833 Pageland Highway  
Lancaster, SC 29721  
Phone: (803) 286-9948  
Fax: (803) 286-5418  
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-867-3886 or  
1-888-739-0748

#### **(Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Richland)**

2000 Hampton Street  
Columbia, SC 29204  
Phone: (803) 576-2749  
Fax: (803) 576-2993  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 304-4252

### **Region 4**

#### **(Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee, Sumter)**

PO Box 1628  
105 North Magnolia Street  
Sumter, SC 29150  
Phone: (803) 773-5511  
Fax: (803) 773-6366  
Nights/Weekends: 1-877-831-4647

#### **(Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marlboro, Marion)**

145 E. Cheves Street  
Florence, SC 29506  
Phone: (843) 661-4830  
Fax: (843) 661-4859  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 660-8145

### **Region 5**

#### **(Bamberg, Calhoun, Orangeburg)**

PO Box 1126  
1550 Carolina Avenue  
Orangeburg, SC 29116  
Phone: (803) 533-7199  
Fax: (803) 536-9118  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 954-8513

### **Region 5 (cont)**

#### **(Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell)**

1680 Richland Avenue, W. Suite 40  
Aiken, SC 29801  
Phone: (803) 642-1618  
Fax: (803) 643-8386  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 827-8668 or  
1-800-614-1519

### **Region 6**

#### **(Georgetown, Horry, Williamsburg)**

2830 Oak Street  
Conway, SC 29526-4560  
Phone: (843) 365-3126  
Fax: (843) 365-3153  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 381-6710

### **Region 7**

#### **(Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester)**

4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600  
N. Charleston, SC 29405  
Phone: (843) 746-3806  
Fax: (843) 746-3851  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 219-8470

### **Region 8**

#### **(Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, Jasper)**

219 S. Lemacks Street  
Walterboro, SC 29488  
Phone: (843) 525-7603  
Fax: (843) 549-6845  
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-614-4698

### **Bureau of Disease Control**

#### **Acute Disease Epidemiology Division**

1751 Calhoun Street  
Box 101106  
Columbia, SC  
Phone: (803) 898-0861  
Fax: (803) 898-0897  
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-847-0902

### **Categories of Health Alert messages:**

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.